

WORKING WITH NON-HEALTH SECTORS: A REVIEW OF EXPERIENCES WITH ECONOMIC APPROACHES TO PROMOTE CYCLING AND WALKING: THE HEALTH ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT TOOL (HEAT)

Francesca Racioppi, *WHO Regional Office for Europe, European Centre for Environment and Health, Rome, Italy*

Sonja Kahlmeier, **Thomas Götschi**, *Physical Activity and Health Unit, Institute of Social and Preventive Medicine, University of Zurich, Switzerland*

Nick Cavill, **Charlie Foster**, **Paul Kelly**, *British Heart Foundation Health Promotion Research Group, Department of Public Health, University of Oxford, England*

Max Herry, *Herry Consult, Austria, Vienna*

Harry Rutter, *National Obesity Observatory England, United Kingdom*

Background and Aims: Walking and cycling are increasingly recognized as effective forms of physical activity, an important public health priority. Urban and transport planning are more influential for mobility behaviour than “classic” health promotion approaches. Therefore, the challenge is to reach out to these sectors to support interventions that promote walking and cycling. Economic appraisals are an established practice for transport projects but rarely take health effects into account. The WHO therefore coordinated an international project to develop a Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT) for cycling and walking.

Methods: Reviews of economic valuations of cycling or walking and of the epidemiologic literature were carried out to identify approaches and relative risk estimates for the health effects. International multi-disciplinary consensus meetings addressed methodological issues for the development of HEAT cycling and walking.

Results: HEAT is a transparent, robust, conservative and practice-oriented tool estimating the value from reduced mortality due to physical activity from cycling or walking, i.e.: if x people cycle (or walk) y distance on most days, what is the economic value of reduced mortality? For regular commuter cycling, the relative risk from a large study was used (RR 0.72, 95% CI 0.57-0.91). For regular walking, an aggregate risk for all-cause mortality of 0.77 (CI 0.63-0.95) has been calculated. HEAT cycling has been applied in several countries. E.g in Austria, it showed that the current bike modal share of 5% leads to 412 averted deaths per year, equating an economic value of over 400 mio. EUR. In Portland, USA, investments of over 40mio. EUR over 20 years lead to quintupling of cycling, with health benefits equating about 14 mio EUR per year. Results from the first applications of HEAT walking from Pamu/Estonia, Kuopio/Finland and Brighton-and-Hove/UK will also be presented.

Conclusions: The HEAT tools have shown to be effective in fostering the integration of health effects into economic transport appraisals.

References:

Gotschi T: Costs and benefits of bicycling investments in Portland, Oregon. JPAH, 2011;8(Suppl 1):S49-S58.

Kahlmeier S, Racioppi F, Cavill N et al. “Health in All Policies” in practice: guidance and tools to quantifying the health effects of cycling and walking. JPAH 2010, 7(Suppl 1), S120-S125.

www.euro.who.int/HEAT